

UK Palestine Mental Health Network statement on the US/Israel assault on Iran and its impact on Gaza and the West Bank

The network joins all those who condemn in the strongest possible terms the criminal attacks currently being perpetrated by the USA and Israel on Iran and on Lebanon. In each country, fatalities and serious injuries are mounting by the day and the destruction of civilian infrastructure, including homes, schools, hospitals, roads, bridges, fuel and electricity stations is horrific. Over one million people have been forcibly displaced in Lebanon.

As has been the pattern in previous wars, while world attention is focussed on the catastrophe unfolding in the wider region, the Israeli government has intensified its practices of murder, violent attacks on civilians, land theft, ethnic cleansing and the destruction of homes and agriculture.

We therefore wish to draw urgent attention to all the ongoing and accelerating crimes against the Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank and the effects they are having on men, women and children.

In Gaza, despite the so-called ceasefire, the genocide is ongoing. Nearly seven hundred citizens have been killed since October 2025, and living conditions, already dire, deteriorated further immediately after Israel launched its missiles at Iran on February 28th. The army closed the Rafah crossing, meaning that all medical evacuations came to a halt and no aid trucks carrying vital supplies were able to enter. While there has been some limited re-opening since, supplies are so low that prices have escalated and people are once more unable to feed their families. This happened during the holy month of Ramadan and has reawakened the trauma of the famine which reached its height during the spring and summer of 2025. While bombing has not been as intense and continuous as prior to October, intermittent drone attacks, bombing, sniper fire and tank shelling occur almost daily. Thus a traumatised people who need safety in order to begin to recover from the effects of genocide are trapped in a state of hyper alertness and fear. This is particularly serious for children whose need for a period of calm is so pressing.

Restrictions remain in place on the heavy machinery needed to remove rubble and restore vital infrastructure so that families have no possibility of moving out of their fragile tents. Fuel restrictions also mean that parents have to cook on wood fires in inflammable tents, putting small children constantly at risk.

Above all, the absence of any momentum towards rebuilding or recovery combined with Israel's punitive restrictions on the key NGO's which had

provided vital services, means that Palestinians in Gaza are trapped in a continuous daily struggle for survival and any sense of possibility or hope for a freer or more just future is being rapidly eroded.

On the West Bank, Israel is imposing conditions which are likewise unliveable as violence intensifies with increasing attacks on homes, villages and agriculture, murder, land theft and ethnic cleansing. At least fifteen Palestinians have been killed since the start of the war, including four members, two of them children, of the Bani Odeh family travelling in their car. Additionally towns and villages are subjected to the stranglehold of closed checkpoints so that people cannot travel for work or family reasons. Prayer at the Al Aksa mosque for Eid ul Fitr was banned, curtailing the most important act of collective worship of the year. The impacts of being fragmented and disconnected on family life, especially during Ramadan, are immeasurable. Because of the strangulation of the Palestinian economy, salaries are not being paid and this, as well as the impossibility of moving around, has meant that most children cannot attend school.

While intolerably oppressive conditions have long predated the recent war on Iran, largely because of the impunity Israel enjoys which has allowed it to pursue its relentless and ruthless policies of elimination over the decades, we are acutely aware of the risk that they are intensifying and accelerating without so much as a whiff of protest from the outside world. We consider it essential that we continue to bear witness to the crimes being perpetrated against Palestinians and to the suffering they are forced to endure and we urge all in our network to likewise raise our collective voice in solidarity and protest.

The Steering Group of the UK Palestine Mental Health Network

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